

School District Nutrition & Physical Activity MODEL POLICY LANGUAGE

The purpose of this model policy language is to provide a template and sample language for district policy writers. This document is not intended for adoption in its entirety by districts, unless they so choose. **It is intended for districts to use AS A TOOL in drafting their own policies.**

Districts may choose to use sections of this document and/or alter the language in any way. However, we believe the language contained in this document is reasonable and sound. We developed this tool to help Rhode Island school districts achieve Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition Goals in a sustainable manner, through the development and adoption of district policy.

Developed and Endorsed by:

**The Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition
August 2004**



**All feedback in the use of this document is greatly appreciated.
Please e-mail comments and suggestions to: melissa.campbell@cancer.org**

STUDENT NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Policy Intent/Rationale:

The _____ School District promotes healthy schools, by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The District supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from high added fat, high added sugar, and low nutrient foods to support school programs.

B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the district nutrition standards. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. To ensure high quality, nutritious meals, foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety, and packaging.

C. Provide more opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should be included in a school's daily education program from grades pre-K through 12. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, in accordance with The Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, as well as co-curricular activities, and recess.

D. The _____ School District is committed to improve academic performance in high-risk groups so that no child is left behind.

Educators, administrators, parents, health practitioners and communities must consider the critical role student health plays in academic stamina and performance and adapt the school environment to ensure students' basic nourishment and activity needs are met. To ensure widespread understanding of the benefits to school environments where nutritious foods are provided and where students have an opportunity for physical activity, a public awareness campaign that highlights research demonstrating the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and capacity of students to develop and learn should be conducted.

E. Establish and maintain a district-wide Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council with the purposes of:

- ? developing guidance to explicate this policy
- ? monitoring the implementation of this policy
- ? evaluating policy progress
- ? serving as a resource to school sites, (e.g. providing lists of healthy incentives, snacks, birthdays, etc.) and
- ? revising policy as necessary

It is recommended that a district-wide Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council be established. (This Council could be an augmentation of an existing Nutrition Advisory Council.) The Council would meet a minimum of two times annually with Council membership including, but not limited to:

- ? District Food Service Director/Manager
- ? Dietitian
- ? Local Health Practitioner (e.g., pediatrician, dentist, or other appropriate certified medical professional)
- ? School Nurse-Teacher
- ? A parent representative from each school
- ? A student representative from each school
- ? Staff member representative from each school
- ? A School Committee/Board member
- ? District Administrative Representative, Co-Chair
- ? Physical Education and Health Program Leader, Co-Chair
- ? Family & Consumer Sciences Teacher
- ? Local Community Partners (e.g. Boys & Girls Club, YMCA)

Responsibilities of the Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council may include, but not be limited to, oversight of the following:

- ? Implementation of district nutrition and physical activity standards
- ? Integration of nutrition and physical activity in the overall curriculum
- ? Assurance that staff professional development includes nutrition and physical activity issues
- ? Assurance that students receive nutrition education and engage in vigorous physical activity
- ? Pursuance of contracts with outside vendors that encourage healthful eating and reduction of school/district dependence on profits from foods of minimal nutritional value.
- ? Consistent healthful choices among all school venues that involve the sale of food.

The Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council will be responsible for preparing an Annual Report by June 15 of each year that includes, but may not be limited to, the following information:

- ? Monthly district menus and meal counts
- ? Listing of all a la carte, vending, and competitive foods sold by school food service
- ? Listing of all other sales of foods throughout the district including vending machines, school stores, culinary and special education programs, in-school and in-class fundraisers, etc.
- ? Listing of physical activity programs and opportunities for students throughout the school year.

STUDENT NUTRITION

The School Breakfast/Lunch Programs:

- ? The full meal school breakfast and lunch programs will continue to follow the USDA Requirements for Federal School Meals Programs.
- ? The School Food Service Program provider will follow the District's Nutrition Standards when determining the items in a la carte and "competitive foods" sales.
 - ? A la carte and "competitive foods" items that do not meet the District Nutrition Standards may be acceptable when offered on a very infrequent, intermittent basis and must be recorded in the Annual Report.
- ? The Food Service Director will work closely with the Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council.

Cafeteria Environment:

- ? A cafeteria environment that provides students with a relaxed, enjoyable climate shall be developed.
- ? The cafeteria environment is a place where students have:
 - ? Adequate space to eat and clean, pleasant surroundings;
 - ? Adequate time to eat meals. (The American School Food Service Association recommends at least 20 minutes for lunch from the time students are seated with their food); and
 - ? Convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals.

Fundraising:

- ? All fund-raising projects are encouraged to follow the District Nutrition Standards.
- ? All fund raising projects for sale and consumption within and prior to the instructional day will follow the District's Nutrition Standards when determining the items being sold.

Teacher-to-Student Incentive:

The use of food items as part of a student incentive program is strongly discouraged. Should teachers feel compelled to utilize food items as an incentive, they are required to adhere to the District Nutrition Standards.

Student Nutrition Education:

The _____ School District has a comprehensive curriculum approach to nutrition in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, all K-12 instructional staff will be encouraged to integrate nutritional themes from the Rhode Island Department of Education Health Education Framework and/or the Rhode Island Family & Consumer Science Framework into daily lessons when appropriate. The health benefits of good nutrition should be emphasized. These nutritional themes include but are not limited to:

Knowledge of the Food Guide Pyramid
Sources & variety of foods
Diet and disease
Healthy snacks
Healthy diet
Major nutrients
Serving sizes
Identify and limit foods of low nutrient density

Healthy heart choices
Dietary Guidelines for Americans
Understanding calories
Healthy breakfast
Food labels
Multicultural influences
Proper Food Safety/Sanitation

The district nutrition policy reinforces nutrition education to help students practice these themes in a supportive school environment.

Parent Nutrition Education:

- ? Nutrition education will be provided to parents beginning at the elementary level. The goal will be to continue to educate parents throughout middle and high school levels.
- ? Nutrition education may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the district website, articles and information provided in district or school newsletters, presentations that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles, and through any other appropriate means available for reaching parents.

Staff Nutrition & Physical Activity Education:

With the purposes of:

- ? Encouraging all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness
- ? Improving staff morale
- ? Creating positive role modeling
- ? Building the commitment of staff to promote the health of students
- ? Building the commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment.

Nutrition and physical activity education opportunities will be provided to all school staff at the elementary, middle and high school levels. These educational opportunities may include, but not be limited to, the distribution of educational and informational materials and the arrangement of presentations and workshops that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles, health assessments, fitness activities, and other appropriate nutrition and physical activity-related topics.

DISTRICT NUTRITION STANDARDS

Nutrition Standards Intent/Rationale:

The _____ School District strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient dense foods in the school setting, the district has adopted the following nutrition standards governing the sale of food, beverage, and candy on school grounds. Schools are encouraged to study these standards and develop building policy using the following District Nutrition Standards as minimal guidelines.

Food:

- ? Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. WHOLE GRAINS, FRESH FRUITS, VEGETABLES, and DAIRY PRODUCTS.
- ? Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day, will have no more than 30% of its total calories derived from fat.
- ? Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day, will have no more than 10% of its total calories derived from saturated fat.
- ? Nuts and seeds with minimal added fat in processing (no more than 3 grams of added fat per 1.75 ounce or less package size) are exempt from these standards because they are nutrient dense and contain high levels of monounsaturated fat.
- ? It is recognized that there may be rare special occasions when the school principal may allow a school group to deviate from these Standards, but those special occasions must be recorded and included in the Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council Annual Report.

Beverages:

- ? ONLY Milk, Water, and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners may be sold on school grounds both immediately prior to and throughout the instructional day. This standard will be phased-in over the next three school years in the following way:
- ? 2004-2005 School Year: ONLY Milk, Water and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners, may be sold or distributed on school grounds both prior to and during the instructional day in the district's elementary and middle or junior high schools, except in an area where students are not permitted access such as the teachers' room.
- ? 2006-2007 School Year: ONLY Milk, Water and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners, may be sold or distributed on school grounds both prior to and during the instructional day in the district's elementary, middle, and high schools, except in an area where students are not permitted access such as the teachers' room.

Candy:

- ? Candy is defined as any processed food item that has:
 - 1. sugar (including brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, fructose, glucose (dextrose), high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, table sugar (sucrose), syrup) is listed as one of the first two ingredients
AND
 - 2. sugar is more than 25% of the item by weight.
- ? Vending sales of candy will not be permitted on school grounds.
- ? Non-vending sales of candy will be permitted ONLY at the conclusion of the instructional school day.

STUDENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

District Physical Activity Goal:

_____ School District shall provide physical activity and physical education opportunities, aligned with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, that provide students with the knowledge and skills to lead a physically active lifestyle.

_____ School District shall utilize the following Implementation Strategies:

1. Physical education classes and physical activity opportunities will be available for all students.
2. Physical activity opportunities shall be offered daily before school, during school (recess) or after school.
3. As recommended by the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), school leaders of physical activity and physical education shall guide students through a process that will enable them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness through the following:
 - ? Expose youngsters to a wide variety of physical activities
 - ? Teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health and fitness
 - ? Encourage self-monitoring so youngsters can see how active they are and set their own goals
 - ? Individualize intensity of activities
 - ? Focus feedback on process of doing your best rather than on product
 - ? Be active role models
4. Introduce developmentally appropriate components of a health-related fitness assessment, (e.g. FitnessGram, Physical Best or President's Council) to the students at an early age to prepare them for future assessments.
5. Begin fitness or activity logging in elementary school. Assist students to interpret their personal attainments and compare them to national physical activity recommendations.
The 2004 Guidelines from NASPE recommend:
 - ? Children should accumulate **at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours**, of age appropriate physical activity on all, or most days of the week.
 - ? Children should participate in **several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes** or more each day.
 - ? Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical **activities** designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness and performance benefits.
 - ? **Extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged** for children, especially during the daytime hours
6. Beginning in Middle School and through High School, administer a health-related fitness assessment with students. Students shall receive results and use this as a baseline in understanding their own level of fitness, creating fitness goals and plans, and logging activities identified to achieve the goals. Logs should include day, time, type and length of activity, whether the activity was done alone or with others, and how the student felt before and after the activity.
7. Physical education classes shall be sequential, building from year to year, and content will include movement, personal fitness, and personal and social responsibility. Students should be able to demonstrate competency through application of knowledge, skill, and practice. (NASPE recommendations for physical education are 150 minutes per week for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students.)